

Individual Supportive Employment (SE) with Long Term Vocational Supports (LTVS) YP630 / YM645

IPRS State-Funded Billable Service

Service Definition and Required Components

Supported Employment (SE) is a person-centered, individualized, evidence-based support service that provides assistance with choosing, acquiring, and maintaining competitive paid employment in the community for individuals ages 16 and older for whom employment has not been achieved and/or has been interrupted or intermittent. This service shall be provided by Employment Support Professionals (ESPs) who are trained in national standards that support the varying needs of individuals and promote community inclusion and employment success.

The Supported Employment model is comprised of two phases:

- (1) **Supported Employment**- the intensive “supported” phase that includes:
 - a) Community-based assessments, job sampling, job shadowing & participation in business-led internship training programs;
 - b) Job development (securing a job in the community or the development of a consumer-led micro-enterprise or small business) and/or on-site job training (including the development of natural supports) to achieve stable employment.
- (2) **Long Term Vocational Supports**- the “maintenance” phase of keeping a job; providing critical elements of phase 1, as long and as often as the person needs the assistance to retain employment. This includes community integration skills and fostering natural supports that allow the individual to keep his or her job.

This service requires the use of a variety of approaches to Supported Employment as cited in field-based research. SE approaches are implemented in order to assist individuals in securing competitive employment in the community that fits their particular needs, interests, and skills while supporting them in ways that enable workplace success; this includes self-employment and business-led internships that lead to jobs. **Competitive Employment** is defined as jobs that pay at least minimum wage, which anyone can apply for and are not set aside for persons with disabilities (this may include seasonal or temp jobs).

SE services promote the North Carolina vision of *Employment First*: “Employment in the general workforce is the first and preferred outcome in the provision of publicly funded services for all citizens with disabilities regardless of level of disability, in a job of their choosing with supports and accommodations provided as necessary to achieve and maintain employment.”

Core Values:

- Person-centered and informed choices
- Integrated, community employment
- Jobs that promote self-determination, recovery, resiliency and self-sufficiency
- Jobs that reduce stigma by enabling individuals to work side-by-side with people in their local communities
- Jobs that promote careers, financial wellness, and asset development
- Competitive wages on employer payroll or consumer-owned business or micro-enterprise
- Development of personal support networks and natural supports as needed
- Long term and flexible job supports that change based on the individual’s needs

Collaboration with Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS): Individuals must have informed choice of whether to receive Phase 1 Supported Employment services through DVRS or an LME/MCO credentialed provider. This must be done in a collaborative and prompt manner where the timeliness of engagement process does not disrupt a person's motivation or access to supports in seeking employment (for example, the person is shown a crosswalk of the benefits/options, participates in discussion, speaks to an SE provider or visits a job setting, and the person makes his or her own decision.)

LTVS is only provided by this service definition; therefore this service and funds must also be available to all individuals that have completed SE phase 1 through DVR, as per 10A NCAC 27G .5801.

<i>Phase 1: Supported Employment</i>

Supported Employment services are supports to participants who, because of their disabilities, need intensive on-going support to obtain and maintain an individual job in competitive employment, or self-employment. Employment must be obtained in an integrated work setting in the general workforce where an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals without disabilities.

Supported employment may also include support to establish or maintain self-employment, including home-based self-employment. Supported employment services are individualized and may include any combination of the following services: vocational/job-related discovery or assessment, person-centered employment planning, job placement, job development, negotiation with prospective employers, job analysis, job carving, training and systematic instruction, job coaching, benefits support, training and planning, limited transportation and transportation training, asset development and career advancement services, and other workplace support services including services not specifically related to job skill training that enable the participant to be successful in integrating into the job setting.

Critical elements of Supported Employment include:

1. **Individualized and Rapid Development of the Employment Plan** (including Rapid Search for a Competitive Job)
 - a. Taking on a "Just Do It" Approach
 - i. Urgency in Career Planning, Job Development and service delivery
 - ii. Employment Plan within 30-days
 - iii. Initial employment assessment and the first in-person employer contact (by employment specialist or consumer) should occur within 30 days of program entry
 - iv. Developing support networks, natural supports, and family outreach, based on the individual's choice
 - b. Networking with employers, employer groups and trade associations
 - c. Clinical team integration (with ESPs as members of a clinical team), or ongoing collaboration with the individual's treatment team for clinical consultation, or for the development of behavioral health support services
 - d. Disclosure – ESPs assist individuals in making the decision as to whether they will disclose their disability to an employer, ensuring that individuals have all necessary information available on the potential ramifications of their choices, and promoting their preferences and self-determination.
 - e. Peer mentorship and support focusing on employment and work issues
2. **Career Planning & Information Gathering**

- a. Person-centered career planning or discovery includes gathering information about work preferences, experiences, skills, current adjustment, strengths, and personal contacts. This may also include business-led internship training and development of a business plan for a consumer-led business or micro-enterprise, resulting in a statement of individual career goals and preferences.
 - b. Work-based vocational assessments are ongoing. Initial assessments are updated whenever new information from experience in competitive work becomes available
 - c. May include some community-based assessment, job sampling and job shadowing in compliance with USDOL regulations
 - d. Work Incentives and personalized benefits counseling, including assistance with accessing eligibility of the *NCDMA Health Coverage for Workers with Disabilities* (NC's "Medicaid Buy-In" program) or referral to professional Benefits Counselors.
 - e. Participation in mock interviews and role-plays and development of resumes, portfolio of work experience and cover letters for job applications
 - f. Addressing barriers to employment such as having a criminal background, a lack of work history, and limited housing and transportation availability
 - g. Identifying and addressing job accommodations needed to support the individual's Employment Plan.
 - h. Identifying and addressing Assistive Technology needs; it is estimated that 10% of individuals served in SE/LTVS may benefit from AT to help with job duties.
 - i. Reviewing potential educational opportunities including retraining and vocational/technical schools
- 3. Job Search and Job Development Activities**
- a. Using and building community networks throughout the job search.
 - b. Frequent employer outreach and presentation of the SE program to secure job interviews for individuals served.
 - c. Outreach to employers including learning the employer's needs, communicating benefits of hiring, and describing the match between the job seeker's strengths and skills and the employer's needs. Includes negotiating with employers to create or restructure jobs.
 - d. Developing and updating resumes, reference letters and career portfolio
 - e. Assisting individuals in obtaining information about a diversity of job types from a diversity of employers, in order to ensure that job placements are individualized to each person's work preferences and strengths.
- 4. Job Entry and Job Site Training and Support**
- a. Provision of intensive supports, including face-to-face contacts, which may include daily support- [eventually transitioning to weekly support] based on the job performance and skill acquisition as reported by the individual/employer.
 - b. As needed, job design support including environmental analysis, task analysis and accommodations or training supports required and development of a business plan if micro-enterprise is developed.
 - c. Job training (including on-the-job skills training and training provided to managers and co-workers to facilitate skills acquisition and the development of natural supports)
 - i. Conduct travel training or assist with identification of transportation as necessary
 - ii. Collaborate with other agencies for clothing, uniforms, shoes, and teach grooming skills required by job or employer.
 - d. Address Job Needs:

- i. Identify and determine action/training plan for addressing transportation, benefit, non-work schedules, work dress/uniform requirements, and other employment support needs.
 - e. Identifying and facilitating natural supports
 - i. Enhance an individual's social and natural supports by developing social network assessments, social network enhancement plans, and self-advocacy training for individuals. Work directly with employers, coworkers, family, and friends to strengthen existing network ties, develop new network relationships, and improve reciprocity.
- 5. Job Support and Transition to Phase 2: Long Term Vocational Supports**
 - a. Planning and transitioning to Long Term Vocational Supports phase 2 of SE
 - b. Job supports are individualized and vary from person to person based upon need and desire.
 - c. ESPs provide less intensive supports, including face to face contacts, fading or transitioning as the person chooses in their person-centered employment plan.
 - d. Developing a contingency plan for a behavioral health crisis, layoffs and/or terminations from employment that includes immediate job search plans and alternative employment-related activities and supports.
 - e. Other supports might include phone calls, meetings with employers to obtain extra feedback, consultation with behavioral health service providers when needed, development of self-monitoring strategies and plans, limited on-the-job coaching to learn new duties, when job duties change.
- 6. Collection and Use of Data**
 - a. The SE program collects and summarizes data on consumer outcomes, including the number of individuals who have obtained jobs, as well as hours worked, wages and benefits earned. (See more detail below under the section, Expected Clinical Outcomes)
 - b. The program uses outcome data to identify areas in which they need to improve their services, as well as areas where they are succeeding and need to be sure to maintain their program strengths.

<i>Phase 2: Long Term Vocational Support</i>

Long Term Vocational Support (LTVS) Services begins after Phase 1 of Supported Employment ends either through this service definition or through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

Individuals needing LTVS after completing the DVRS Phase 1 SE sponsored services must have LTVS in place when the DVRS services end to avoid lapse in services. Generally during the final weeks of training once an individual is demonstrating competency on the job, the individual will transition to LTVS. Transitioning to LTVS will take place during the last month of Phase 1, DVRS, during which the ESP will collaborate with LTVS staff (when these services are provided by separate staff in a CRP) to transition services by meeting jointly with the employer and individual to assure that LTVS are coordinated and seamless.

Transitions must be individualized and based on the person's support needs and preferences. Phase 1 SE through this definition references national standards which indicate that the SE provider should work with the person to make the transition to LTVS generally after one year of stable SE.¹ However, achieving one year of employment in a job should not automatically trigger a transition out of SE services.

¹Becker, Swanson, Bond, and Merrens (2011, May). Evidence-Based Supported Employment Fidelity Review Manual (2nd Ed.)

LTVS is an individualized service that is provided as often and as long as the person needs it with the purpose of maintaining a job, providing job intervention, and developing skills for promotion and career development that lead to personal growth and financial stability. The individual participates in choosing the type of service and support he or she receives, and the individual has the right to decline this service at any time.

Often, an individual may need or may choose to return to Phase 1 of Supported Employment to, for example, change jobs or to upgrade or enhance skills in the current job. The return to Phase 1 of Supported Employment should be flexible, seamless, and individualized to address work performance, social interactions that negatively impact employment success, conflict resolution with coworkers/supervisors, maintenance of job skills, and to retain motivation.

ESPs continue to stay in regular contact with individuals receiving LTVS (and when appropriate, with the employer) without arbitrary time limits, as these supports are based on the individual needs of the person.

ESPs should encourage and empower an individual to be as independent and self-sufficient as possible while still providing a level of collaboration and supports, as needed by the individual.

Critical elements of Long Term Vocational Support include:

- Career and educational goals clarification; for example:
 - Ongoing career planning and development supports that expand opportunities for professional growth (wages, hours or days of work, satisfaction with work and/or exposure to alternative work options and opportunities).
 - Supports for increased skills through reenrollment in higher education or credentialing and certificate programs
 - Through individual interviews and counseling, monitor satisfaction with employment, and determine level of interest and opportunities available for advancing with current employer, and/or changing employers for career advancement.
- Fade intensive on-site job coaching, to a level that minimizes support from the ESPs, but ensures that there is sufficient support is in place for ongoing employment retention and success.
 - Provide and assist employer with short term on the job retraining based on changing job requirements and any performance issues identified.
- Securing job accommodations due to disability;
- Decision support regarding on-the-job disclosure due to disability;
- Facilitate or provide peer mentorship and support focusing on employment and work issues
- Building skills for coping with work problems; for example:
 - Absences, personal leave, dealing with a behavioral health crisis or other crisis
 - Conflict resolution skills with coworkers, customers, supervisors
 - Having a contingency plan for layoffs and terminations from employment that include immediate job search plans and alternative activities and supports.
- Continued coordination of work incentives, benefits counseling and assistance with Social Security & NCDMA Health Coverage For Workers With Disabilities;
- Ensure that the individual is reporting earnings to Social Security and any other public benefit programs as required (i.e., community supported housing assistance)
- Teaching budgeting skills, financial literacy and asset development
- Collaboration with other service providers and supports as needed to engage behavioral health, as well as residential and transportation services.

Table 1. SE Approaches

The following evidence-based and best practice approaches encompass all the critical elements of SE/LTVS described above. It is preferred that providers develop their program by being trained in and offering these various approaches in practice to provided person-centered and individualized/customized services and meet the variety of consumer needs. These models include: Supported Employment, Customized Employment, Self-Employment (Micro Enterprises/Small Business), and Business-Led Internships

1	<p><u>Supported Employment (SE)</u> is first traditional evidence-based practice model of employment for people with significant disabilities. Traditional SE has been researched since the early 1980's to promote community-based employment. Its core components are described in the critical elements above for phase 1 SE and phase 2 LTVS.</p> <p>Most recently, research on SE from 1996-present has led to redefining the model and developing fidelity measurements and toolkits through the Dartmouth Individual Placement and Support Model which is endorsed by SAMHSA via the Supported Employment Evidence-Based Toolkit (2010).</p> <p>This person-centered and individualized approach provides assistance with choosing, acquiring, and maintaining paid employment in the community. Clear and documented advantages include higher wages and benefits, increased opportunities to interact with individuals without disabilities, improvement in participant's adaptive behavior skills, and greater employee satisfaction (McGaughey & Mank, 2010).</p> <p>Supported Employment is based on the principles of inclusion and full citizenship which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero Exclusion • Integrated, competitive employment • Flexible supports • Long Term Vocational Supports • Choice • Engagement of personal support networks
2	<p><u>Customized Employment (CE)</u> is a flexible process designed to personalize the employment relationship between a job candidate and an employer in a way that meets the needs of both. It is based on an individualized match between the strengths, conditions, and interests of a job candidate and the identified business needs of an employer. CE utilizes an individualized approach to employment planning and job development- one person at a time, one employer at a time (ODEP, 2011). CE was developed and fostered by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy and is an evidence-informed best practice model (Federal Register, 2002).</p> <p>CE can be provided to any individual with a complex life that poses challenges for achieving competitive employment who may have limited job skills or face other barriers to employment.</p> <p>CE core principles include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiation with employers - employers voluntarily negotiate specific job duties or expectations with the job seeker; • Customized job tasks - the distinct job tasks are carved from existing job descriptions, re-structured from one or more jobs, or created so that they match the interests and skills of

	<p>the job seeker, and so that they also meet a specific workplace needs of the employer; thus the resultant job descriptions are “customized;”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person-centered services - the job seeker is the primary source of information and guidance about jobs to explore in the job market; • Client control - the job seeker, not the ES or counselor, controls the planning process; • Discovery - this process is used to reveal assessment of the job seeker’s interests, skills, and needs (but can be supplemented -- not replaced -- by traditional assessment); and • Jobs have the potential for advancement - identified jobs should have potential for advancement even if the job seeker was previously unemployed, underemployed, or never held a job.
3	<p>Self-Employment, Micro-Enterprise, Small Business: Across the nation, self-employment is increasingly recognized as a viable employment option for people with disabilities. Self-employment uses a strength-based, not deficit-based outlook and a person is not required to "get ready" to start a small business. To develop a micro-enterprise or small business, a customized approach is applied to assist an individual or individuals who are partnering, to identify their strengths and needed supports and to assemble funding recourses to execute their business plan. Starting a micro-enterprise or small business includes developing a business plan, a solid marketing plan, getting training on management skills, and securing startup capital.</p> <p>"A functioning business plan assists the individual in identifying personal and rehabilitative support needs such as flexible work hours, assistive technology services and devices, bookkeeping services, and transportation. The development of a plan also is important for the identification of funding: Small Business Association (SBA) backed small business loans, grants through state development agencies, loans through non-profit lending sources, credit card advances, and financial support from friends and families. Individuals who are receiving rehabilitative services and benefits such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) may consider using Social Security Work Incentives to underwrite start-up or expansion costs." (Startup USA, 2012)</p> <p>Strategies for Exploration and the Discovery Process include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing a Business Plan • Conducting a Feasibility Study • Accessing Community Supports • Identifying Funding • Using Work Incentives <p>Individuals (prospective owners) may also want to seek assistance from local Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), the Senior Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), other business owners, friends, families, and rehabilitation professionals trained in developing enterprises.</p>
4	<p>Business-Led Internship Training: These include evidence-based programs such as Project SEARCH and other internship or transitional training best practice programs that provide on-the-job site internship training programs in competitive industries to enable individuals with significant disabilities to learn transferable work skills to enable them to be hired by the industry that trained them or in similar industries (not affirmative industry).</p> <p>Components of the Business-led Internship Training programs include:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internships are located in a competitive industry (i.e., medical facilities/hospital, distribution center/warehouse, banks, hospitality center) and individuals are supported by employment support professionals and managers and co-workers during the job training process • Internship training complies with the USDOL standards for work experience training which can include paid and un-paid internship programs. • Classroom training may or may not be a component of the internship and is aligned with the training provided in the internship sites. • Collaborations and cooperative agreements exist between the education partner, Community rehabilitation provider or supported employment provider, and the business and if appropriate, the DVRS who supports the internship via braided funding and services. • Rapid engagement of the Employment Plan and job development such that interns may be hired promptly if the employer wants to hire the intern before the internship ends.
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Provider Requirements: There should be an ongoing, relationship between the provider and the SE/LTVS program which promotes competitive employment and interventions outlined in the individual's employment plan. The provider encourages individuals served to consider employment, and referrals for supported employment are solicited by many sources. Providers shall collaborate and coordinate with appropriate behavioral health providers, families, natural and peer supports, housing specialists, LME-MCO staff, transportation agencies and other community service providers who support the individual.

Organizational *Employment First* emphasis:

- Agency Focus on Employment First and Competitive Employment – providers shall promote competitive employment in multiple ways and collaborate with other agency services to, for example, ensure questions about employment are included at intake, promote employment supports by posting flyers within clinical residential sites, tracking employment as an outcome of all services within the Agency (not just within the SE/LTVS program).
- Executive Team Support for SE – agency leadership is engaged with SE program at various levels, from quality assurance activity and outcomes review, to participation in SE leadership meetings.
- Providers partnering with the NC Business Leadership Network to focus on a “pull” system where employers engage with providers to seek out talent, increase market share, and supplier diversity.

SE/LTVS providers must demonstrate that they meet competency through experience providing employment supports. It is preferred that providers also be DVR-approved CRP providers per 10A NCAC 89D .0204 Community Rehabilitation Program Standards.

These policies and procedures set forth the administrative, financial, clinical, quality improvement, and information services infrastructure necessary to provide services. Provider organizations shall demonstrate that they meet these standards by being credentialed by the LME-MCO. As part of the credentialing process, the provider must notify the LME-MCO of the therapies, practices, or models that the provider has chosen to implement. Additionally, within one year of enrollment as a provider, the organization shall achieve national accreditation with at least one of the designated accrediting agencies.

The organization is responsible for obtaining authorization from the LME-MCO for services identified in the PCP and/or Employment Plan. The SE/LTVS provider organization shall comply with all applicable federal and state requirements.

Staffing Requirements: An SE/LTVS program provider agency must have sufficient staffing, known as Employment Support Professionals (ESPs), to meet the varying needs of individuals and promote community inclusion and employment success. All staff meet as a team regularly, at least monthly, to discuss cases, job leads, and other issues. Staffing requirements are outlined in the table below, followed by a description of roles:

Table 2. Employment Staff Level Requirements, Experience and Qualifications	
Lead Employment Support Professional	<p>1 full-time Employment Support Professional (also referred to here as Lead ESP) that meets QP status according to 10A NCAC 27G.0104, who has knowledge, skills, abilities required by the population served.</p> <p>The Lead ESP shall have at least 2 years supported employment experience and 1 year of any type of supervisory* experience.</p> <p>The Lead ESP can supervise other SE/LTVS staff (maximum of 10) that may include additional ESPs and Employment Peer Mentors.</p> <p>*Supervisory experience documentation may be obtained through HR reference checks.</p>
Employment Peer Mentor (No more than 2 individuals may share this FTE position.)	<p>FTE* Employment Peer Mentor(s) are current or former recipients of services who have a minimum of HS/GED (or equivalent certificate from the Occupational Course of Study) and have been employed in any capacity in the past.</p> <p>This role must be staffed by individuals who support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) MH/SA individuals: NC Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPSS) who is or has been a recipient of mental health or substance abuse services. or b) IDD individuals: a Self-Advocate who is or has been a recipient of intellectual and developmental disability services. <p>*If a provider has limited availability of qualified peer mentors in their catchment area, efforts to build capacity, train, and recruit peers must be documented and continuous (For example, providers can seek consultation on availability of peers in their geographical areas through the NCCPSS certification program at UNC BHRP.) DHHS shall monitor capacity building activities to ensure priority hiring of peer mentors. In the meantime, providers may provisionally substitute this role for 1 full-time additional Employment Support Professional (see staff requirements for Additional ESP). <i>However, providers must employ peer mentors in this role no later than December 31, 2013.</i></p>
Additional Employment Support Professional	<p>1 full-time Employment Support Professional that may be either a QP, AP, or paraprofessional who meets the requirements according to 10A NCAC 27G.0104 and has the knowledge, skills and abilities required</p>

	by the population to be served/supported.
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Lead Employment Support Professional: Understanding of the approaches described in Table 1 is required. Specialization is encouraged in regards to specific job development areas as: job coaching, career planning, and business relations. In addition to the SE/LTVS critical elements mentioned above, the full-time Lead ESP is responsible for:

- Overseeing the operations of the program or team;
- Providing oversight of employment services and collaborating with behavioral health supports
- Supervising ESPs to assure the delivery of evidence-based and ethical practices; supervision must occur at least monthly with each staff.
- Managing human resources and continuing education for ESPs
- Collaborating with VR as necessary to discuss referrals
- Directly providing services to individuals, such as:
 - Assuming an active role in screening referrals and assessing individuals at intake;
 - Modeling behaviors through service provision for the purpose of supervision;
 - Developing as well as participating in the PCP and/or Employment Plan and convening employment planning meetings
 - Working with recipients’ natural supports
 - Coordinating support services

Employment Peer Mentor: The Employment Peer Mentor’s lived experience, as a recipient or former recipient of services, provides expertise that professional training cannot replicate. Employment Peer Mentors offer hope and motivation by drawing from their own employment experiences and resiliency to encourage other individuals to seek and maintain employment and community integration.

Employment Peer Mentors may provide critical elements of SE/LTVS as needed, do not hold their own caseloads, but can support any and all individuals enrolled in the program as needed. The responsibilities of the Employment Peer Mentor must be focused on the following:

- Promoting self-determination, recovery, self-advocacy, and self-direction; assisting individuals in identifying strengths; wellness goals; setting objectives, and identifying barriers
- Attending treatment team meetings with individual to promote the individual's use of self-directed advocacy tools; teaching individuals techniques for developing or rewriting PCPs and/or Employment Plans how to ask for appropriate services in community; supporting the individual through the employment planning process.
- Engaging and outreach to individuals in other programs and services to encourage employment
- Modeling advocacy skills for disclosure issues or requesting job accommodations
- Teaching wellness management strategies and self-management plans/tools to use in the workplace and in their personal lives;
- Linking to support groups in the community to learn from other peers, promote hope, problem-solve through work situations, and decrease social isolation.
- Providing education to other team ESP to assist in understanding of self-advocate and peer support roles, promoting a culture in which an individuals’ points of view and preferences are recognized, understood, respected, and integrated into service;
- Providing resources and teaching transportation skills (teach bus routes, etc) as necessary to secure employment
- Sharing their own personal story to model how to choose, get, and keep meaningful employment

- Supporting individuals to make informed decisions about supported employment and build community connections.
- Supporting the vocational choices individuals make and support them in overcoming job-related concerns and building social skills in the community that will enhance job acquisition and tenure.

Additional ESP: Understanding of the approaches described in Table 1 is required. Specialization is encouraged in regards to specific job development areas as: job coaching, career planning, and business relations. In addition to the SE/LTVS critical elements mentioned above, ESPs are responsible for:

- Developing the Employment Plan for individuals assigned to him or her.
- Collaborating with outside behavioral health providers, families, natural supports, housing, transportation and other community service providers who support the individual
- Coordinating services and participating in the individual's Person Centered Planning process
- Developing holistic, integrated interventions
- Identifying services, resources, and accommodations as needed to assist individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing, those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and those who are blind or visually impaired.

Training and Certification Requirements

All staff in Table 2 must be trained in a DHHS approved "SE/LTVS 101" curriculum within **8** months of implementation of this policy or upon each staff's date of hire. Additional training is required for Employment Peer Mentors. Peers must participate in DHHS approved *Vocational Peer Mentoring* curriculum within **12** months of hire date.

This DHHS approved curriculum meets nationally accepted professional skills and competencies to ensure high quality services and high outcomes for individuals. Additionally, these trainings enable ESPs to earn the designation of ***Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP)*** by passing the national examination established by the Employment Support Professional Certification Council (ESPCC) founded by APSE (Association of People Supporting Employment First).

It is highly recommended that all staff in Table 2 work to become a ***CESP*** to demonstrate that national competencies for evidence based practices have been met. ESPs are also encouraged to seek out other national credentials such as the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) credentials.

For each year of employment, all staff in Table 2 must receive **5 or more** hours of additional training and should include specialty approaches for the implementation of ethical, person-centered, best practice SE/LTVS per population served. Training may be in the form of locally provided training, webinars, or regional/national conferences and must be documented. Examples include:

- Dartmouth Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Supported Employment Training
- Customized Employment
- Self-Employment
- Business-Led Internships
- College of Employment Supports
- Other trainings that can assist in enhancing employment outcomes:
 - Advocacy/Self-Determination
 - Asset Development and Financial Wellness
 - Assistive Technology
 - Benefits Counseling and Social Security Work Incentives
 - Budgeting/Money Management
 - Business and Employer Relations
 - Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS)

- Independent Living Skills
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP), blind or visually impaired, and deaf and hard of hearing accommodations
- Motivational Interviewing
- IDDT (Integrated Dual Disorders Treatment)
- Permanent Supportive Housing (SAMHSA toolkit model)
- RENEW transition planning and support model
- SOAR (SSI-SSDI/Outreach/Access/ Recovery) Stepping Stones to Recovery Training
- Supervising NC Certified Peer Support Specialists Training (UNC BRHP)
- Tenancy Support training (DHHS)
- Youth in Transition and Supported Employment/Supported Education
- Trauma-Informed care
- Wellness Management and Recovery Interventions (such as WRAP, IMR/WMR)

Program Fidelity Monitoring

Programs shall be evaluated according to standardized fidelity measures from the approaches outlined in this definition. These measures evaluate the extent to which defining elements of the program model are being implemented, and those inconsistent with the program model are not being implemented.

Fidelity protocols will be determined by DHHS and measurement scales that match approaches implemented and population served will be used (for example, the Dartmouth IPS-SE Fidelity scales for providers serving MH/SA). The aim of these evaluations is not only to ensure that the service is being implemented as intended, but also to provide a mechanism for quality improvement feedback.

The DHHS will also track adherence to the model and approaches by reviewing annual performance outcomes from providers and through their participation in the administration of the appropriate fidelity assessments.

Service Type and Setting

SE/LTVS is a periodic type of support service under NC Administrative Code T10:14V.2300.

Employment staff typically spends 65% or more of total scheduled work hours in the community.

Services are provided in the most integrated setting, one that “enables individuals with disabilities to interact with nondisabled persons to the fullest extent possible, and are community-based within the individual’s defined ‘community’, i.e., where the person chooses to live, work and play” (ADA/Olmstead, 2011).

- Services may be direct and/or indirect and rehabilitative in nature, providing job placement, individual and employer supports.
- Services are provided at the individual’s job location, home and other community settings.
- Services are not provided in facility-based settings or affirmative industries.

Program Requirements

The activities and services of SE/LTVS shall be driven by the PCP and/or Employment Plan.

- Each ESP (with the exception of the Employment Peer Mentor) shall have a range of 20-30 individuals in their caseload, with this varying depending on where the individual is in their SE/LTVS phase.
- Employment Peer Mentors generally are not responsible for a specific caseload rather they assist in supporting consumers in their efforts to become employed and retain employment.

- ESPs primarily provide only employment services; however, providers may need to spend some of their time providing clinical home activities especially when the populations served are individuals with substantial disabilities such as SPMI and IDD.
- ESPs provide coverage for each other as needed.

Units are billed in 15-minute increments.

Eligibility Criteria

The individual is age (16) sixteen and older and who:

- A. Has an Axis I or Axis II diagnosis of Mental Illness, Substance Use, and/or Intellectual/Developmental Disability, including Autism and Traumatic Brain Injury.

AND

- B. Experiences difficulties in at least one of the following areas:
 1. Functional impairment
 2. Crisis intervention/diversion/aftercare needs, and/or
 3. At risk of placement in a more restrictive setting

AND

- C. Expresses the desire to work or has an established pattern of unemployment, underemployment, or sporadic employment; and requires assistance to obtain employment in addition to what is typically available from the employer to maintain competitive employment because of functional limitations and behaviors associated with the individual's diagnosis.

Entrance Process

Per the evidence-based model, there is a Zero-Exclusion criterion meaning that individuals are not excluded from receiving and engaging in SE/LTVS services as a result of job readiness factors such as active substance use, history of violent behavior, criminal background issues, cognitive impairments, treatment or medication non-compliance, or personal presentation.

Any individual who expresses a desire to work and is eligible can receive SE/LTVS services with wrap-around supports and collaboration with other behavioral health services as needed.

Employment specialists offer to help with another job when one has ended, regardless of the reason that the job ended or number of jobs held.

Continued Service Criteria

The individual shall continue receiving SE/LTVS services if they meet at least one of the following requirements:

- (1) The individual has made little progress in meeting employment goals and there is documentation that supports that continuation of SE services will be effective in meeting employment goals identified in service plan
- (2) The individual is making progress in meeting employment goals, but the interventions identified in the service plan need to be modified to achieve competitive employment,
- (3) The individual has obtained a job and desires Phase 2 Long-Term Supports as identified in the Service Plan.
- (4) The individual needs long-term support in learning how to manage benefits such as Social Security, Ticket to Work, etc.
- (5) The individual needs support or training in order to change jobs, increase hours of employment, or advance in their career

Discharge Criteria

Consumer's level of functioning has improved with respect to the goals outlined in the service plan and LTVS has been provided to ensure long-term job maintenance and ongoing behavioral health support as needed by the individual. The decision to discharge should be based on one or more of the following:

- Consumer has requested the discontinuance of SE/LTVS and this must be documented in the service plan.
- Consumer has moved outside of the LME/MCO catchment area
- Consumer has long-term medical issues and is unable to work
- Consumer no longer meets criteria for this service

Expected Clinical Outcomes

Employment in the general workforce is the first and preferred outcome in the provision of publicly funded services for all citizens with disabilities regardless of level of disability, in a job of their choosing with supports and accommodations provided as necessary to achieve and maintain employment.

SE/LTVS should result in long-term competitive employment and community integration that enables an individual to gain the greatest level of personal independence, which encompasses the promotion of social, physical, financial, and emotional well-being. Examples of outcomes include:

- Working in competitive, integrated, community based employment setting
- Earning at least minimum wage and the wage that others receive performing the same work
- Integrated employment: alongside others without disabilities or employment in a job not reserved exclusively for people with disabilities
- Decreased use of public benefits due to wages
- Completion of identified goals in individualized service plan (career development, school, self-employment)
- Increased community immersion (engagement in civic clubs, volunteering)
- Increased independent living and community/social skills (employment, mobility, housing, retirement supports)
- Enhanced self-advocacy skills and training
- Increased access to natural supports

To provide a standardized mechanism for SE/LTVS providers to track consumer outcomes, which can then guide their own performance initiatives, providers will be required to regularly submit the following data through a DHHS approved reporting tool. DHHS and the LME/MCO may use the data obtained from these measures to track trends that effect service satisfaction, accessibility and utilization and employment outcomes. This data then can be used to leverage changes in the provider network related to quality and availability of services. Required data include:

- Employment service type: Individual SE, long term vocational support, self-employment, internship
- Access to employment services: volunteering, in school, still considering employment services, in transition (1) linking to services with DVR or (2) linking to SE services with MCO
- Employment status: full time 30+ hours, part time 15-30 hrs, 5-15 hrs, less than 5 hrs/week
- Hourly pay rate
- Wages earned in the past month (gross income)
- Hours worked in the past month
- Entitlements received at entry to SE service (SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, Medicare)
- Entitlements received at 12 months of employment start date

- Individual eligible for Medicaid Buy-In program (“Health Coverage For Workers With Disabilities” through DMA)
- Availability of employer benefits (health insurance, dental insurance, PTO, sick pay, vacation pay, holiday pay, meal/retail discounts, 401K, traditional retirement, long-term, short-term disability, life insurance)
- Industry/Job Classification (per DOT, USDOL)

Documentation Requirements

A SE/LTVS Service Record shall be maintained and shall be written per date of service. It is recommended that a service activity log or database be used to capture frequency of monthly billable events, SE/LTVS critical elements and service types. In addition, a modified service note is required for any and all significant events, changes in status, or situations outside the scope of work.

A documented discharge plan shall be discussed with the recipient and included in the service record. In addition, a completed LME-MCO Consumer Admission and Discharge Form shall be submitted to the LME-MCO.

A PCP and/or Employment Plan is required. If the person receives an enhanced service, SE/LTVS services must be identified on the PCP.

Refer to the DMH/DD/SAS Records Management and Documentation Manual for a complete listing of documentation requirements.

ESP documentation shall include the following:

- Complete the initial Employment Plan within the first 30 days, in partnership with the individual and with members of their support network if applicable.
- Individualized job search plan is completed by the ESPs with updates with changes in job, wages or work hours.
- SE services previously provided by DVRS or other non-VR program shall be documented on the PCP and/or Employment Plan.
- Regularly scheduled team meetings based on the individual’s support needs, including other service providers/natural supports, should take place as needed but at least every 3 months to assist the consumers to move forward in meeting employment goals. These meetings must be documented.
- When the individual is in the phase 1 SE job development phase, the ESP shall include information on all job contacts made for consumers including:
 - Calls to specific employers for inquiries and/or to set up appointments
 - Visits to specific web sites to identify job openings
 - Completing job applications on line and in standard paper formats
 - All face to face employer contacts
 - Participating in interviews
 - Pre-employment screening activities (background check, drug screen immunization records collected)
 - Pre-employment job orientation activities and training
- When the individual is in the phase 1 SE job training phase, the ESP shall include information that details:
 - Job Task Analysis and training support
 - Training aides, or ADA accommodations used to support training
 - Case notes on daily job site trainings

- Contacts with employer, supervisor & co-workers in support of training the individual or to train appropriate social skills
- Identification of natural supports at work and in the community in support of job maintenance
- Plan for job maintenance and the transition to long term supports
- When the individual is in phase 2 LTVS, the ESP shall include information on all contacts made for consumers in the follow-along phase of service delivery:
 - Long Term support goals for job maintenance and for maintaining & community natural supports
 - case notes on periodic long term support contacts
 - Employer satisfaction with job performance, social interaction, and transportation, punctuality arriving at work and in taking scheduled breaks
 - Individual job satisfaction with working conditions, transportation, wages, benefits and career plans/ goals
 - When appropriate (individual under guardianship or desires family/caregiver be informed) reports from the family or caregiver regarding the individual's job satisfaction as detailed above.

Utilization Management

There is no prior authorization required for the first 64 units (16 hours) of SE/LTVS services for the initial engagement of the individual (for both SE and LTVS phases). Authorization for continued services must occur after the 64 units and services may cover up to 12 months for the initial authorization period. To continue SE/LTVS, reauthorizations should be based on the level of intensity required to acquire stable employment or interventions required for continued employment.

Services are based on consumer choice and are expected to achieve the specific employment and rehabilitative goals detailed in the individual's Person Centered Plan.

This is an outpatient support service and does not require concurrent case management or other service.

Service Exclusions and Limitations

An individual may receive SE/LTVS services from only one SE/LTVS provider organization during any active authorization period for this service.

The phase 1 SE service may not be provided to individuals who are actively funded by DVRS to meet their needs under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or P.L. 94-142. An individual referred from DVRS Supported Employment must receive Phase 2 LTVS from this service definition if they so choose.

Service delivery to individuals other than the recipient may be covered only when the activity is directed exclusively toward the benefit of that recipient (for example, small business models).

SE/LTVS shall not be provided during the same authorization period as Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) or the Medicaid Innovations Waiver for individuals with IDD.

Resources and References

Americans with Disabilities Act. *Statement of the Department of Justice on Enforcement of the Integration Mandate of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Olmstead v. L.C.* Available at: http://www.ada.gov/olmstead/q&a_olmstead.htm

APSE (Association of Persons Supporting EmploymentFirst):
<http://www.apse.org/employmentfirst/>

Butterworth, J., Gandolfo, C., Revell, G., Inge, K.J. (2007). *Community Rehabilitation Programs and Organizational Change: A Mentor Guide to Increase Customized Employment Outcomes*. T-TAP Training and Technical Assistance for Providers. Available at: http://www.t-tap.org/documents/mentor_guide.pdf

Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy- *Integrated Employment Toolkit*:
<http://www.dol.gov/odep/ietoolkit/> - *Employment First*:
<http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/EmploymentFirst.htm>

Employment Support Professional Certification Council (ESPCC). *CESP Candidate Handbook* (2012). Available at www.apse.org

Gross, L., Moore, J. & Keul, P.K., (2011) *National APSE Certification Institute: Role Delineation Study*. Available at www.apse.org

MassWorks. *Integrated Community Employment: Sample Service Delivery Process*. Available at: <http://www.massworks.org>

NC Division of MH/DD/SAS: Employment First Initiative.
<http://www.ncdhhs.gov/mhddsas/services/employment>

NC Business Leadership Network. <http://www.ncbln.org>

NC Certified Peer Support Specialist Program at UNC BHRP <http://pss-sowo.unc.edu/pss>

NC Division of Medical Assistance Health Coverage for Workers with Disabilities.
<http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dma/medicaid/hcwg.htm>

North Carolina Assets Alliance. <http://ncassets.org/>

Social Security Benefits Counseling- Work Incentive Resources. <http://www.ssa.gov/work/home.html>

SELN (State Employment Leadership Network) Resources: <http://www.selnmembers.org/>

SE Approaches (Table 1)

IPS- Supported Employment

Becker, D.R., Swanson, S., Bond, G.R., & Merrens, M.R. (2011, May). *Evidence-Based Supported Employment Fidelity Review Manual*. Available at:
<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~ips/page19/page49/page49.html>

Drake, R.E., Bond, G.R., & Becker, D.R. (2012) *Individual Placement and Support: An Evidence-Based Approach to Supported Employment*. New York: Oxford University Press. Resources Available at: <http://sites.dartmouth.edu/ips/>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2009). *Supported Employment: How to Use the Evidence-Based Practices KITs*. DHHS Pub. No. SMA-08-4364, Rockville, MD: Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Available at: <http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Supported-Employment-Evidence-Based-Practices-EBP-KIT/SMA08-4365>

Customized Employment

Griffin, C. and Hammis, D. *Customized Employment*. Resources Available at: http://www.griffinhammis.com/customized_employ.asp

Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy. *Customized Employment and Flexible Work Arrangements*. Available at: http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/CustomizedEmployment.htm#UJ0wT2cm_E0

Self-Employment

Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy. *Self-Employment & Entrepreneurship*. Available at: http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/SelfEmploymentEntrepreneurship.htm#UJ0vdGcm_E0

Griffin, C. and Hammis, D. (2003) *Making Self-Employment Work for People with Disabilities*. Resources Available at: <http://www.griffinhammis.com/selfemploy.asp>

Business-Led Internships

Project SEARCH High School Transition Program (1995) Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, Ohio. Resources Available at: www.projectsearch.us/OurPROGRAM/ProgramModel.aspx